

**Barnegat Bay Partnership
Communication and Education Committee Meeting**

October 28, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

WebEx Meeting

Attending CEC Members: Shari Kondrup (Chair, BTMUA), Kaitlin Gannon (Co-Chair, JCNERR), Lynette Lurig (NJDEP), Joel Mott (NJ Pinelands Commission), Peter Brandt (USEPA), Barbara Spinweber (USEPA), Karen Walzer (BBP Staff Liaison), Graceanne Taylor (SBB), Wesley Dalzell (RCTB), Becky Laboy (OCSCD), Amber Mallm (Monmouth Co. Planning), Dr. John Wnek (OCVTS), Kelly Scott (IBSP), Angela Andersen (Long Beach Township), Chris Claus (Ocean Co. Parks and Recreation)

Attending Guests: Vanessa Dornisch (JCNERR), Jenny Tomko (NJDEP Bureau of Marine Fisheries), George Murnyak (BBP Citizenship Representative to the Policy Committee), Murray Rosenberg (BBP Citizen Representative Alternate), Susan Slim (BBP Citizen Representative Alternate), Heidi Thompson (Jersey Shore Style), Chelsea Pascoe (Orsted), Emily McGuckin (Barnegat Bay Watershed Ambassador)

Barnegat Bay Staff in Attendance: Dr. Stan Hales, Martha Maxwell-Doyle

Absent CEC Members: Chelsea Kulp (NJ American Water)

Welcome and Introductions

Meeting called to order by Shari Kondrup at 9:35 am, who informed attendees the meeting would be recorded. Introductions were made.

Review/Approval of August 26th, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Joel motioned to approve the minutes and Wesley seconded. Minutes approved unanimously, with no edits.

Coastal Flooding Communications Campaign

Vanessa Dornisch gave a presentation on the Risk Communication Campaign for Coastal NJ, a joint social media campaign between JCNERR and the NJDEP. The campaign aims to better communicate with the public about coastal climate change impacts and coastal flooding risk. They are reaching out to educators for help distributing the materials and providing feedback on draft materials to ensure the campaign addresses public knowledge gaps and organizational education needs. They have released a pre-campaign survey running through November 20, 2020 to share within organizations and to the public. Participants will receive completed materials and guidance in May 2021, to use as they wish. Once the campaign concludes, a follow-up survey will be distributed to gauge campaign success, and JCNERR will host a NOAA “Building Risk Communication Skills” training in October 2021.

Communication Plan Revision

Karen reported that the CEC subcommittee formed to work on revising the Communication Plan met twice and made good progress. A draft of the matrices for three of the four priorities – water quality, water supply, and living resources – was shared with the CEC at the meeting for input

regarding partners to include on the actions. After a discussion the CEC decided that other stakeholders should be included in addition to official BBP partners. Once a first draft is completed for the land use priority, it will be shared with the CEC for similar input. Following their partner/stakeholder feedback, the completed draft for all four priorities will be sent to the CEC for review and comments.

BBP Outreach Updates

Citizen Representative/Alternates Report: George Murnyak reported on the latest activities of the citizen representative volunteers. They have been meeting with partners for briefings on what their respective organizations are involved in. He encouraged partners seeking public input on programs to contact the citizen representatives and mentioned that they may be requesting talks from other partners in the future. Karen stated that interested partners could contact her as well.

2021 Education and Outreach Retreat: Karen Walzer asked CEC members if they wanted to begin planning a virtual 2021 retreat or wait until an in-person event is possible. The CEC recommended a virtual event. Members gave feedback on planning, such as splitting the event into multiple shorter sessions (2-3 hours), keeping it interactive (survey questions, breakout rooms), and holding the event during the day instead of the evening. Karen also said she would contact Vanessa to see if the retreat could work well with her campaign.

Volunteer Master Naturalist News: Becky Laboy reported that the Volunteer Master Naturalists had started a quarterly newsletter. The first issue (Autumn 2020) features education and volunteering opportunities from partners, articles from naturalists about their own projects, and other topics. She requested photos and at-home or safe outdoor volunteering opportunities to include in future issues. This year's VMN course was cancelled due to COVID-19, with the next course tentatively planned for Fall 2021. VMN volunteers helped to remove invasive species at John C. Bartlett County Park (formerly called Berkeley Island County Park) on two Saturday mornings in October.

Partner Updates and New Business

OCSCD: Becky reported on OCSCD grant projects. Inspector Kristen Adams is working on the NRCS Sustainable Practices for Aquaculture Resources Conservation (SPARC) grant. She has been visiting aquaculture operations to tour nurseries and learn oyster growing techniques, and will be working with a soil scientist on sediment analyses. OCSCD is a subcontractor on two NJDEP-funded projects: a stormwater basins project and the Jersey-Friendly Yards stewardship certification program. On January 27, 2021 Becky will present a virtual program on attracting biodiversity and birds to your yard for the Ecological Landscape Alliance.

SBB: Graceanne reported on a virtual conference by the North Atlantic Association for Environmental Education. NAAEE provided many excellent resources and new best practices to implement. She recommended attending next year's conference in Pittsburgh. SBB has an upcoming book club event on Oct 29th with the author of *Geography of Risk*. SBB interns are working with Dr. John Wnek on a project about crabbing. DEP Phase 2 grant projects are in the planning phase. The EcoCenter has finished construction on a greenhouse and monarch

“mansion.” SBB also did a Facebook Live event at Janet’s Garden on Island Beach State Park about native plant gardening. While the SBB office is closed, they have been running drop-offs every Wednesday for CSA produce by Honeybrook Farms, as well as Terracycle boxes for candy/snack wrappers, coffee pods/K-cups, and razor blades. There will be an additional drop-off for pumpkins in November.

LBT: Angela gave an update on the LBT Marine Education Field Station, which has water access to the bay. The station has wet lab space on the lower level and open space for education programs on the upper level. Dr. Wnek installed a weather station, and they plan to add a marsh cam facing Clam Cove. Live feeds from both will be featured on their website. They have also added a fish cleaning station and a mobile kitchen. There are plans for a terrapin hatchery and a native plant garden. The field station has started a podcast, LBT Field Station Chats. LBT has also purchased 22 acres for the Clam Cove Reserve with help from the Land Trust.

Orsted: Chelsea reported on the virtual open house held about their offshore wind project. They have also been working on the Pro-NJ Grantor Trust, a \$15 million trust for minority and women-owned businesses trying to enter the offshore wind industry. There will be an official announcement by the Governor’s office.

Pinelands Commission: Joel reported that the Pinelands Commission was amending its Conservation Management Plan, including the stormwater rules. A new Land Use Sustainability Committee has been established to prepare for climate change impacts, which meets Fridays. The PC’s education work has focused on school programs and the Thursday Pinelands speaker series. They have an upcoming talk on the nocturnal food web, three other talks in November, and will break for December to resume the series in January. The PC is also planning for the 2021 Pinelands Short course on March 13, and whether to hold it virtually or outdoors. A Pine Barrens Byway storymap is now on the website; users can virtually tour the 130-mile trail.

JCNERR: Kaitlin reported on the annual NERR meeting, which is taking place over two weeks. She is also working with Martha on a NERR science collaborative project on mosquito populations, egg distribution, and climate change implications. They have produced a digital infographic, brochures, and educational modules about using eDNA, which will be distributed once completed. Two events are coming up in November, a presentation by Ken Able on his book *Beneath the Surface* on Nov 12th and a Lunch n’ Learn with the MATES crab team on Nov 11th. JCNERR has a Halloween Critter Count social media event running through the 31st, using iNaturalist to look for Halloween-themed wildlife and posted with the hashtag #HalloweenCritterCount.

IBSP: Kelly reported on a project to replace the 120 waysides in the park. Forty of them are in the process of being replaced, edited, and updated. Education and outreach has continued over social media, and the park is producing videos. A dunegrass planting is scheduled for December 5th, which may or may not be open to the public. Friends of Island Beach State Park will also be holding its First Day hike, and the Christmas tree drop off the 2nd weekend of January. Four barn owl boxes will be installed at the park, as well as a kiosk to feature Art in the Park (kiosk to be located at the fork in the Spizzle Creek trail).

RCTB: Wesley reported on this season's education activities. Upwellers were running at reduced capacity, and the clams have been put out on the lease site for the winter. There were fewer visitors due to the pandemic. RCTB has been putting together 7-20 min videos for teachers to use and will be offering virtual programs over the winter. RCTB has also joined the Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (ANJEE) as an organizational member.

EPA: Barbara reported on a meeting between regional NEPs and EPA social media staff. She learned how to submit posts for sharing on EPA social media and encouraged CEC members to send posts her way.

MATES: John reported on the student researchers' presentations on the 11th and the 13th at American Fisheries Society conference. He's also been working with Kelly at Island Beach State Park, caring for a terrapin taken from the bay in 2017 and found in Maine. The terrapin is being quarantined for a year to ensure she isn't carrying any diseases and also hadn't been bred for the pet trade. MATES will also be holding a virtual research expo in late April, where students will present a virtual portfolio for judges to review. Dr. Wnek is looking for volunteers to judge at the expo.

BTMUA: Shari reported on BTMUA outreach activities. These included the virtual Evening at the Reservoir series, a series of rain barrel presentations and workshops through September and October, and a Project WET training for Georgian Court University education students. BTMUA is finishing recording instructional videos for the Rutgers School of Continuing Education course, Effective Environmental Field Sampling.

Meeting adjourns

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.